

Taste of Amish Country

8 RECIPES FROM NORTHERN INDIANA



Midwest Living®

Fresh-picked

Plump, juicy blueberries thrive in northern Indiana's cool spring and early summer. Pluck your own at you-pick farms or buy a basket at farmers markets to use for baking or eating one at a time like candy.

Blueberry Almond Bars

This good-to-eat treat combines blueberries, butter, white baking pieces and almonds.

PREP 25 minutes **BAKE** 50 minutes

- ½ cup butter or margarine**
- 1 12-ounce package white baking pieces (2 cups)**
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten**
- ½ cup sugar**
- ½ to 1 teaspoon almond extract**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ½ cup blueberry jam**
- ¼ cup sliced almonds**

- 1.** In a small saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Remove from heat. Add 1 cup of the baking pieces (do not stir). Set aside. Grease a 9x9x2-inch baking pan. Set aside.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, combine eggs and sugar. Add butter mixture to egg mixture; stir just until combined. Stir in almond extract.

- 3.** In a small bowl, stir together the flour and salt. Add flour mixture to egg mixture; stir just until combined. Spread half of the batter into prepared pan. Bake in a 325° oven for 15 to 20 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove from oven.

- 4.** Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, melt jam over low heat, stirring occasionally. Spread melted jam evenly over warm crust. Stir the remaining 1 cup of baking pieces into the remaining batter. Drop the batter in small mounds onto the jam filling. Sprinkle with almonds.

- 5.** Bake about 35 minutes more or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean and top is lightly browned. Cool on a wire rack. Cut into bars. **Makes 16 servings.**

Blueberry tip: To minimize blueberries bleeding when added to muffins and quick breads, use fresh when possible. Blueberries bleed when the skins break. When using frozen blueberries, add them to the batter while they're still frozen. Whether fresh or frozen, make sure the blueberries are the last ingredient, and stir gently into the batter.

Blueberry Twisties

This recipe won best of show at the Marshall County Fair in Plymouth.

PREP 45 minutes **RISE** 1 hour 45 minutes

BAKE 12 minutes

- 1 package active dry yeast
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup warm water (105° to 115°)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1 beaten egg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon baking soda
- 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon finely shredded lemon peel
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup blueberry spreadable fruit
- Powdered Sugar Glaze** (recipe follows)

1. Stir the yeast into the warm water to soften. Stir in sour cream, cooking oil, egg, granulated sugar, salt and baking soda. Beat until well combined.
2. With a wooden spoon, stir in as much of the flour as you can. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead in enough remaining flour to make a moderately stiff dough that's smooth and elastic (6 to 8 minutes total).
3. Shape dough into a ball. Place in a lightly greased bowl, turning once to grease surface of the dough. Cover; let rise in a warm place until doubled ($1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours). Line a large baking sheet with foil. Lightly grease foil.
4. Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface. Cover and rest for 10 minutes. Roll dough into a 16x12-inch rectangle. Stir lemon peel into the blueberry fruit. Spread filling over half of the length of the rectangle. Fold dough over to make a 16x6-inch rectangle.
5. Cut the bread dough crosswise into 1-inch-wide strips. Twist one strip two or three times and place on the prepared

baking sheet. Repeat for remaining strips of dough, leaving $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches between strips on baking sheet. Cover and let rise for 30 minutes.

6. Bake in a 375° oven for 12 to 14 minutes or until golden. Remove from oven; transfer twisties to a wire rack.

7. Drizzle Powdered Sugar Glaze over warm twisties. Serve warm or at room temperature. **Makes 16 servings.**

Powdered Sugar Glaze: In a mixing bowl, stir together $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups powdered sugar, 1 tablespoon milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla. Add additional milk, 1 teaspoon at a time, to make a drizzling consistency.

Blueberry Smoothies

Blueberries lend a purple tinge to this refreshing blender beverage.

START TO FINISH 5 minutes

- 2 cups chilled fresh blueberries or slightly thawed frozen blueberries
- 1 cup chilled pineapple-orange juice, pineapple-orange-strawberry juice or orange-strawberry-banana juice
- 1 8-ounce carton vanilla low-fat yogurt
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- Fresh or frozen blueberries (optional)**
- Orange peel curls (optional)**

1. In a blender container, combine the 2 cups blueberries, juice blend, vanilla yogurt and sugar. Cover and blend for 1 to 2 minutes or until almost smooth.
2. Pour immediately into tall glasses. If you like, thread additional blueberries on skewers and add an orange peel curl for garnish. **Makes 3 servings.**



Blueberry Twisties

PHOTOGRAPHS: (FROM TOP) JOHN REED FORSMAN, BOB STEFKO



Reigning blueberries

Blueberries thrive in acidic, sandy soil and prefer a chilly spring and early summer that transitions to full-on hot, the kind of climate you'll find in north-central Indiana. Lake Michigan's climate-moderating effect also plays a role.

CELEBRATE THE END OF THE BLUEBERRY HARVEST over Labor Day weekend at the Marshall County Blueberry Festival in Plymouth (30 miles south of Mishawaka). The four-day event includes hot-air balloon launches, a parade, fireworks, a traditional blueberry stomp, live entertainment and more than 400 crafts booths. Another 100 booths offer food, including blueberry donuts and blueberry pie.

FAMILIES SWARM TO MISHAWAKA, which boasts abundant farmers markets and thriving berry farms like the Blueberry Ranch. At the ranch, one of the Midwest's largest U-pick farms (left), board trams to and from the fields or get packaged fresh berries and treats. ■

On the farm

Farmers raise millions of ducks per year at Culver Duck and Maple Leaf, where you can visit a retail store. This recipe pairs the flavorful meat with vegetables for home-cooked comfort.

Potato-Topped Duck Stew

PREP 25 minutes **COOK** 28 minutes

- 3 boneless duck breast halves (with skin) (about 1½ pounds) or 1¼ pounds skinless, boneless chicken breast halves**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped (1 cup)**
- 2 stalks celery, sliced (1 cup)**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 2 14-ounce cans chicken broth or 3½ cups chicken stock**
- 1 8-ounce can tomato sauce**
- ¾ cup extra-dry vermouth, dry white wine or chicken broth**
- 2 bay leaves**
- 1 10-ounce package frozen peas and carrots**
- ¾ teaspoon dried sage, crushed**
- Potato Topper (recipe follows)**
- 2 tablespoons snipped fresh chives**

1. Trim excess fat from duck (do not remove skin). Score the skin in a diamond pattern. Season duck breasts with salt and pepper. In a 4-quart Dutch oven, cook duck breasts, skin side down, over medium heat for 5 minutes. Turn and cook about 5 minutes more or until browned. Drain off fat, reserving 2 tablespoons fat. Remove duck; set aside. (If using chicken, brown chicken on both

sides in 2 tablespoons olive oil; set aside.)

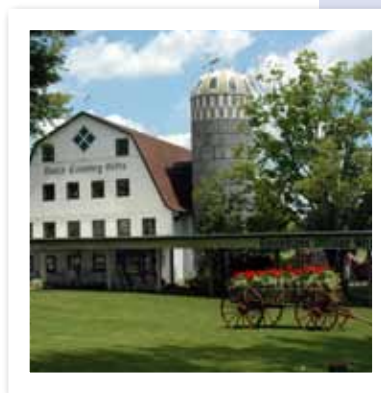
2. Add onion, celery and garlic to the Dutch oven. Cook and stir over medium heat for 4 minutes. Add broth, tomato sauce, wine and bay leaves. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Remove skin from duck and discard. Cut duck into 1-inch pieces. Add duck to pan. Simmer, covered, for 20 minutes. Stir in peas and carrots and sage. Cook, uncovered, for 8 to 10 minutes or until peas and carrots are tender, stirring occasionally.

3. Remove bay leaves; discard. Stir half of the Potato Topper into stew until blended. Spoon remaining potato topper into six mounds in shallow soup bowls. Spoon stew around potatoes; sprinkle with chives. **Makes 6 servings.**

Potato Topper: Peel and quarter 2 pounds Yukon gold potatoes or baking potatoes (such as russet). In a medium saucepan, cook potatoes and 1 teaspoon salt, covered, in enough boiling water to cover for 20 to 25 minutes or until tender; drain. Mash with a potato masher or beat with an electric mixer on low speed. Add ¼ cup butter, softened. Season to taste with salt and ground black pepper. Gradually beat in ⅓ to ½ cup milk to make potato mixture light and fluffy. Set aside. **Makes about 4 cups.**



PHOTOGRAPHS: (FROM TOP) MARK THOMAS, COURTESY OF ELKHART COUNTY CVB



Local products

A mix of small towns dots the scenic Amish countryside just off the interstate in north-central Indiana. Red barns, simple white-frame houses and huge vegetable gardens mark farmsteads along country roads.

Tiny Middlebury in the heart of Amish Country offers a nice selection of restaurants, as well as family-owned shops selling Amish goods and farm products. Das Dutchman Essenhaus (*left*) encompasses an inn, craft shops and a large Amish-style restaurant with 30 types of pie. More understated, the Village Inn of Middlebury attracts locals who favor its homestyle fare (meat loaf, mashed potatoes).

JUST OUTSIDE MIDDLEBURY, Culver Duck processes millions of ducks raised on-site and by area Amish farmers, helping secure northern Indiana's claim as one of the country's largest duck-raising centers. Nearby Maple Leaf Farms handles 12 to 15 million birds a year and operates the retail store Duck, Down and Above that carries everything from down bedding to duck products in nearby Leesburg. ■

Just popped

Do you know the difference between yellow, red and blue popcorn? Find out in Amish Country, where shrewd snackers experiment with flavors and textures. Whether salty or sweet, it makes for a satisfying bite.

Honey Mustard Snack Mix

This zesty mix uses one of Indiana's favorite snack foods—popcorn, which makes for a wholesome treat.

PREP 10 minutes **BAKE** 20 minutes

- 1½ cups crispy corn and rice cereal**
- 1 cup bite-size shredded wheat biscuits**
- ¾ cup unblanched whole almonds**
- ½ cup peanuts**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 3 tablespoons honey mustard**
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce**
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder**
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- 4 cups popped popcorn**

1. In a 13x9x2-inch baking pan, combine corn and rice cereal, wheat biscuits, almonds and peanuts; set aside. In a small saucepan, melt butter. Remove from heat; stir in mustard, Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder and cayenne pepper. Drizzle over cereal mixture; toss to coat.
2. Bake in a 300° oven for 20 minutes, gently stirring after 10 minutes. Stir in popcorn. Spread mixture on a large sheet of foil; cool. Transfer to a storage container; cover and keep at room temperature for up to 3 days. **Makes 15 (½ cup) servings.**



Poppin' fresh

Did you know? Indiana grows the second-largest popcorn crop (after Nebraska), and the late Orville Redenbacher hailed from Valparaiso.

Amid cornfields about 5 miles south of Topeka (105 miles east of Valparaiso), Yoder Popcorn invites visitors to stop into their store (above). A sign in the salesroom proclaims that Americans eat 17 billion quarts of popped popcorn annually, or about 58 quarts per person.

The Yoders cultivate several acres and purchase additional inventory from other Indiana growers. Visitors can purchase some on-site or find it in supermarkets, specialty stores or online. Try different kinds for different flavors. Yellow has a stronger corn taste than white. Red tend to be a bit on the nutty side; blue tastes subtly sweet. The smaller Lady Finger variety has no hull, which means fewer reminders between the teeth. Sharon Yoder, who manages the retail end of the family business shares her secret to crisp popcorn. "Don't seal the pan tightly, because moisture needs to escape or the popcorn will be soggy. Use a healthy type of oil, such as canola, and make sure it's hot." ■



PHOTOGRAPHS: (FROM LEFT) BLAINE MOATS; BOB STEFKO (2)

Simple pleasures

Experience Amish life firsthand at the farmstead Amish Acres in Nappanee. After the tour, save room for the family-style, all-you-can-eat Thresher's Dinner.

Regal Marble Chiffon Cake

This show-stopping cake is a favorite at Amish gatherings. Make one for your next special occasion.

PREP 45 minutes **BAKE** 65 minutes at 325°
COOL 2 hours

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
3 tablespoons granulated sugar
2 tablespoons cooking oil
 $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups sifted cake flour or 2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups granulated sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooking oil
7 egg yolks
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cold water
1 teaspoon vanilla
7 egg whites
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cream of tartar
Chocolate Glaze (recipe follows)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sifted powdered sugar (optional)
Milk (optional)

1. In a small saucepan, combine cocoa powder, the $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water, the 3 tablespoons granulated sugar and the 2 tablespoons cooking oil. Stir over low heat for 1 to 2 minutes or until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat; cool.
2. Meanwhile, in a large mixing bowl, stir

together flour, the $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups granulated sugar, the baking powder and salt. Make a well in center of flour mixture. Add the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooking oil, the egg yolks, the $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cold water and the vanilla. Beat with an electric mixer on low speed until combined, then at high speed about 5 minutes or until satin smooth.

3. Thoroughly wash beaters. In another large mixing bowl, beat egg whites and cream of tartar until stiff peaks form (tips stand straight). Pour egg yolk mixture in a thin stream over entire surface of beaten whites; fold in lightly by hand.

4. Transfer one-third of batter to a medium bowl. Gently fold in cocoa mixture.

5. Turn half of the light-color batter into an ungreased 10-inch tube pan. Top with half of the dark batter. Repeat layers of light and dark batters. With a narrow spatula, gently swirl through batters to marble, leaving distinctive light and dark areas throughout.

6. Bake in a 325° oven for 65 to 70 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched. Invert cake in pan; cool thoroughly. Loosen cake from side of pan; remove from pan.

7. Spoon Chocolate Glaze over top of cake, allowing excess glaze to drip down side. After the glaze sets, combine powdered sugar and a little milk to make an icing of drizzling consistency, if you like. Drizzle over cake.

Makes 12 servings.

Chocolate Glaze: In a small heavy saucepan, heat 4 ounces cut-up

semisweet chocolate and 3 tablespoons butter over low heat until just melted, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Stir in $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups powdered sugar and 3 tablespoons hot water, 1 teaspoon at a time, until glaze is smooth and of drizzling consistency.



PHOTOGRAPH: RON CROFOOT

Shoofly Pie

Make this classic crumb-topped pie at home or save room for dessert at Amish Acres in Nappanee.

PREP 40 minutes **BAKE** 40 minutes

- ½ 15-ounce package rolled refrigerated unbaked pie crust (1 crust)
- ¾ cup boiling water
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup mild-flavored molasses
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- ¼ cup dark corn syrup
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup cold butter, cut into pieces
- Whipped cream (optional)

1. For crust: Let pie crust stand at room temperature for 15 minutes. Unroll pie crust. Ease into a 9-inch pie plate, being careful not to stretch pastry. Fold under extra pastry. Crimp edge as desired. Do not prick pastry. Set aside.
2. For filling: In a medium bowl, combine boiling water and baking soda. Stir in molasses, maple syrup, corn syrup and cloves. Let mixture cool about 30 minutes or until just warm. Beat in eggs.
3. For topping: In a small bowl, combine flour, brown sugar and cinnamon. Using a pastry blender, cut butter into flour mixture until mixture resembles coarse crumbs*; set aside.
4. Sprinkle ½ cup of the topping over the bottom of pie shell. Carefully pour in the filling. Sprinkle remaining topping evenly over pie (make sure to cover entire surface with crumbs to prevent filling from bubbling out during baking). To prevent overbrowning, cover edge of pie with foil.**

5. Bake in a 375° oven for 20 minutes; remove foil. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes more or until mixture appears set when gently shaken. Cool on a wire rack. Serve slightly warm or at room temperature. If you like, serve with whipped cream. Store, covered, in the refrigerator.

Makes 8 servings.

***Pastry blender tip:** If you don't have a pastry blender to cut in butter, use two table knives. Begin by cutting the cold butter into ½- to 1-inch chunks, then add to the dry ingredients. Move the blades next to each other, pulling in opposite directions through the butter until mixture looks like coarse crumbs.

****Test Kitchen tip:** To protect the edges of a piecrust from overbrowning, tear off a 12-inch square of aluminum foil; fold it into quarters. Cut a 7- to 7½-inch circle out of the center of the foil. Unfold the foil and place it on the pie, loosely molding the foil over the edges.



PHOTOGRAPHS: BOB STEFKO



Unique charm

To better understand Amish culture, visitors come to Nappanee, where its tourism slogan of Embrace the Pace aptly describes this serene village with stereotypical scenes of Amish simplicity and rural Midwestern beauty (20 miles south of Elkhart). Here, you'll find black horse-drawn buggies traveling the winding rural roads.

PART HISTORIC FARMSTEAD, part restaurant and musical theatre, Amish Acres gives visitors an insider's look at a typical Amish home and barn. (Things haven't changed much in the last 100 years.) For a culture overview, stop by the Round Barn Theatre. The Restaurant Barn (above) is famous for its all-you-can-eat Amish-style dinners that serve down-home food and Shoofly pie.

IN THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE, Mennonite- and Amish-owned businesses sell locally crafted quilts, furniture, candles, food products and household goods. Pick up a Countryside Shoppes map at the Elkhart County Visitor Center. ■

From the heart

The Amish are frugal and practical, yet creative and resourceful within the parameters of their beliefs. The hearty and satisfying homestyle dishes found in area restaurants reflect those traits.

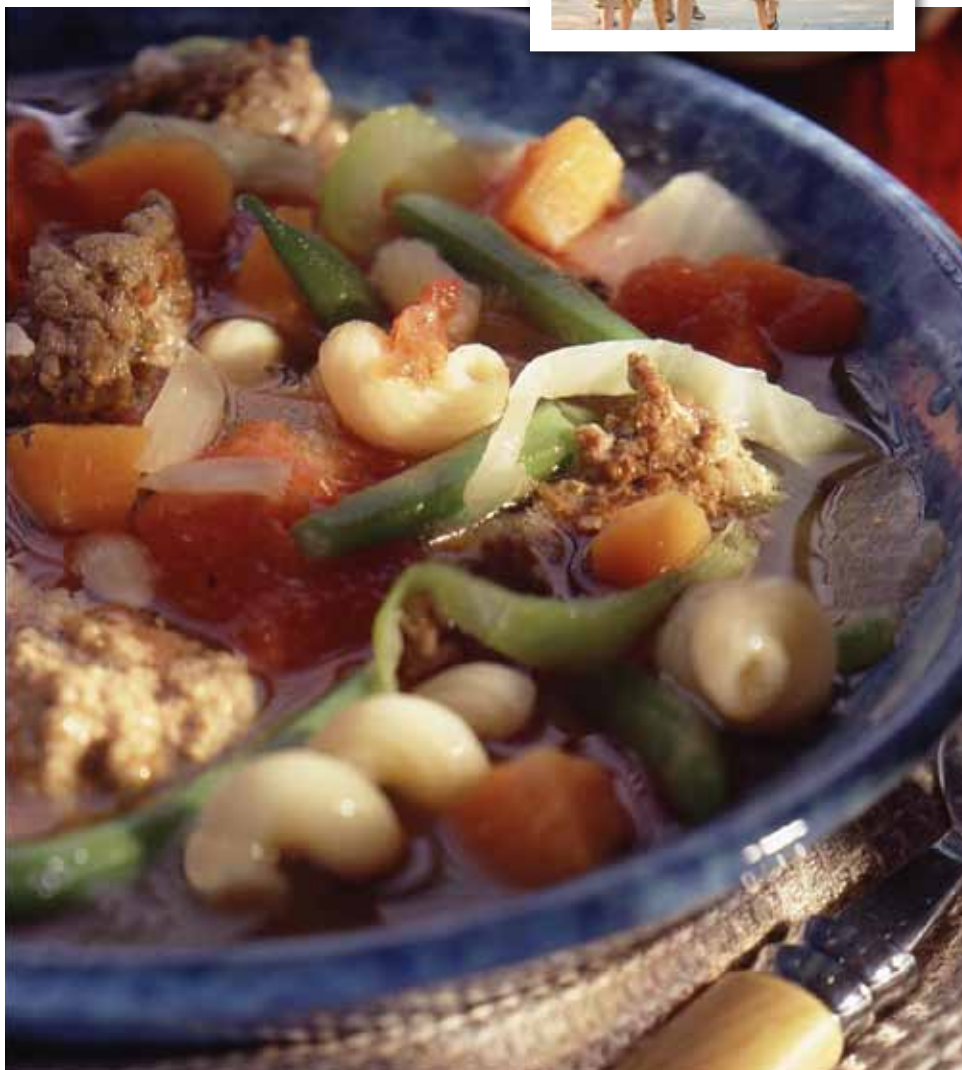
Vegetable-Beef Soup

This chunky soup makes for a meal.

PREP 15 minutes **COOK** 35 minutes

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 5½ cups water
- 1 14-ounce can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped carrot
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley flakes
- 2 teaspoons instant beef bouillon granules
- 1 teaspoon bottled minced garlic
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano, crushed
- ½ teaspoon dried basil, crushed
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 cups shredded cabbage
- 1 14½- to 16-ounce can cut green beans, drained
- ½ cup dried elbow macaroni
- Grated Parmesan cheese

1. In a 4-quart Dutch oven, cook ground beef until brown. Drain off fat.
2. Stir in the water, tomatoes, onion, celery, carrot, parsley, bouillon granules, garlic, oregano, basil, and pepper. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, for 20 minutes.
3. Stir in cabbage, green beans and macaroni. Simmer, covered, for 15 minutes more. Sprinkle each serving with Parmesan cheese. **Makes 8 servings.**



Hidden gems

Simple pleasures like bucolic backroads, Amish farmsteads and down-home cooking beckon visitors to this region. The best place to start is in Elkhart, a town of 50,000 that has cultivated a hip, smaller-city persona and thriving arts community while preserving its roots (*above left*). The visitors center north of downtown showcases a small gallery of local quilts to whet your appetite, as well as free maps and guides to area attractions.

DON'T LEAVE THE ELKHART COUNTY VISITOR CENTER

without your free copy of the Heritage Trail Audio CD. The audio tour cues visitors to a variety of historic and cultural sites, attractions and hidden gems along the 90-mile trail as it loops through Elkhart, Bristol, Middlebury, Shipshewana, Goshen, Wakarusa and Nappanee.

COME SEE 19 LIVING QUILTS created with more than 100,000 blooms in seven communities before frost sets in (*above*). These painstakingly tended patches of flowers remind us why we love quilts, spreading out in creative precision and bringing color to any spot. ■

PHOTOGRAPHS: PERRY STRUSE, COURTESY OF ELKHART COUNTY CVB (2)